

61-2479

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1 June 1966

Dear Cy:

As you can see from the attached memorandum, the evidence we have generally corroborates General Larsen's contention that approximately 10,000 North Vietnamese troops operate in the Cambodian border region. We cannot establish that they are based there for any substantial periods of time but we are confident of their presence in approximately this number.

Sincerely,

(Signed) W. F. Raborn

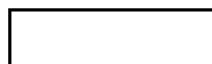
W. F. Raborn

Attachment

The Honorable Cyrus Vance
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Department of Defense
Washington, D. C.

NSA review(s) completed.

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R. J. Smith/mfb

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RDP80B01676R000100060003-4X1

28 May 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Central Intelligence
FROM : Chief, Far East Area, OCI
SUBJECT : North Vietnamese Military Units in Cambodia

1. Evidence available here indicates that there are between four to six North Vietnamese regiments currently positioned in the Cambodia-South Vietnam border area but that not all of them are in Cambodia. One North Vietnamese "Front" or division level headquarters, the 630th formerly 326th has been operating in the Cambodia-Pleiku Province area since 1965. It was this headquarters and its three subordinate North Vietnamese regiments, the 32nd, 33rd and 11th (also known as the 66th), which took part in the November 1965 fighting with the US 1st Air Cavalry Division in the Ia Drang Valley/Chu Pong mountain area. The total strength of the 630th and its units is about 6,500 men.

2. This 630th Front has had a history of operating across the border into Cambodia. For example, during the Ia Drang fighting, [redacted]

[redacted] the Front headquarters and one of its regiments move across into Cambodia and then back into South Vietnam. Furthermore, [redacted]

[redacted] as late as March of this year placed this headquarters several miles in Cambodia.

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3. A number of prisoners of war taken in April 1966 have indicated that there are additional North Vietnamese units operating in the Cambodia-Pleiku Province border area. These prisoners reported that the North Vietnamese 18B, (1,500) 6th (1,000-1,500) and 141st (1,500) Regiments are also in the Chu Pong mountain area. Another captured Communist soldier has reported that another North Vietnamese Division headquarters is now also in Cambodia. We do not know the strength of this force but it could be substantial.

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4. The available evidence indicates that some 10,000 Vietnamese soldiers in four to six regiments are now positioned in the Cambodia-Pleiku Province border area. Not all of the Communist forces in the area are believed located in Cambodia, but some probably are. From past experience, we do not doubt that these units will use Cambodia territory for maneuvering in tactical situations as well as a safehaven when and if it becomes necessary. [redacted] some areas in Cambodia near the border which we believe are Viet Cong base areas.

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Prepared by: [redacted]

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